

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-20 are cancelled.

Claims 21-40 are new.

Support for each new claim is found at the originally filed claims and throughout the specification.

Upon entry of the amendment, Claims 21-40 will be active.

No new matter is believed to have been added.

The cancellation of Claims 1-20 obviates all previous objections and rejections.

Applicants respectfully point out that the product of present Claim 21 necessarily results in an extruded sheet comprising individual microparticles that have only partially hydrophobicized surfaces.

This feature of the product of present Claim 21 is not described or suggested by Keller or Benoit, and thus, present Claim 21, and the claims depending therefrom, cannot be anticipated by or obvious in view of Keller and Benoit.

For example, in present Claim 21, an individual impressed microparticle that does not possess hydrophobic properties prior to the hydrophobicizing would be partially embedded in the at least one surface of the extruded sheet. After the hydrophobicizing, only the portion of the surface of the embedded microparticle that is not embedded in the surface of the extruded sheet would be hydrophobicized, and thus, only a portion of the surface of the microparticle would be hydrophobic.

The entire surface the each required particle of Keller is hydrophobic (see, for example, paragraphs 17, 58 and 59 of Keller). Keller, at paragraph 59, for example, describes “porous powder particles...and a hydrophobic layer present on their surface.”

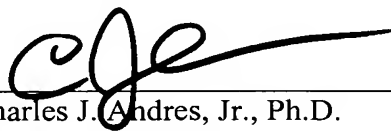
Thus, Keller does not describe or suggest microparticles partially embedded in an extruded sheet surface with only a portion of the surface of the embedded microparticles being hydrophobic. The disclosure of Benoit does not cure the deficiencies of Keller.

Similarly, Keller and Benoit do not describe or suggest, as described for example, in present Claim 30, partially embedding at least some of microparticles lacking hydrophobic properties in the surface of an extruded sheet and then hydrophobicizing the embedded microparticles such that only the portions of the surface of the embedded microparticles that are not embedded in the surface of the extruded sheet would be hydrophobic. Thus, present Claim 30, and the claims depending therefrom, cannot be anticipated by, or obvious in view of, Keller and Benoit.

Applicants submit the present application is now in condition for allowance. Early notification to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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